

Norfolk
Department
of Utilities

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Report



At Work

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Utilities crews battled their way through tree roots and limbs to restore water and wastewater services interrupted by Isabel.



Izzy was no match for Utilities

Quality service came through despite fallen trees, lack of power

With back-up generators in place at both water treatment plants, low-lying facilities like the Utilities Operations Center sandbagged against flooding, vehicles secured, work areas protected, and stand-by crews and essential employees in place, the Department of Utilities was as prepared as possible for Hurricane Isabel.

All that preparation paid off as Norfolk, despite the loss of power that affected much of Hampton Roads, was able to continue its treatment and distribution of quality drinking water and its transmission of wastewater to Hampton Roads Sanitation District throughout and after the storm.

The story is not without its action-packed moments, like when water production employees hooked up one of the back-up generators a few hours before the height of the hurricane. Or when, in the middle of the night, a wastewater repair crew fixed a force main that a tree had broken. The repair, of course, included cutting the tree and removing it before the line could be repaired.

But, as most emergency management professionals will tell you, immediate attention to recovery from a hurricane is the most critical time. That's when the separate divisions of the Department of Utilities came together as a unit.

For the Utilities Operations Center, which is the department's Field Operations Center during an emergency, recovery began at 5 am on Friday, September 19.

"This is when we truly became a combined operation," said Utilities Operations Manager Eric Tucker. "The Utilities Operations Center houses four divisions, and they all crossed over into one another's jobs for this event."

Field engineers helped wastewater pump station crews inspect the stations.

Water accounts field operations personnel helped water distribution crews repair water distribution lines.



Roots of fallen trees displaced water meters and broke water lines.



A water distribution crew (above) installs a temporary water line to restore service. (Below) bypass pumps were installed at some wastewater pump stations without power.



See Izzy, next page.

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Wastewater mainline crews worked with wastewater pump station crews to install bypass pumps at wastewater pump stations. And water distribution crews were available to help with that operation, as well.

Water production helped secure fuel for the generators at the pump stations without power.

Field operations personnel helped office staff answer phones on 12-hour shifts.

"At least one person from every other division either called in to offer assistance or came out to Combined Ops to help out with recovery," said Tucker.

That teamwork was essential. From 5 am until 5 pm on Friday, the Divisions of Water Distribution and Wastewater received 207 calls for service. On Saturday they received an additional 253 calls. In a two-day period, the Operations Center received the service calls it normally handles in two-and-a-half weeks.

Repairs were hampered in some cases because downed power lines and trees had to be removed before repair could begin. However, Utilities was still able to restore services quickly.

Directly after the storm 106 wastewater pump stations were without power. Within four days, despite lack of power, the system was managed using portable generators and bypass pumps.

Of the calls received on Friday and Saturday following Isabel, 70 were hurricane related water repairs. Of those 70, all now have at least temporary water service with permanent repairs scheduled as debris is cleared. ♦



Generators supplied power to wastewater pump stations until power was restored to them.



The use of generators required the Division of Wastewater adopt a twice-a-day fueling schedule.

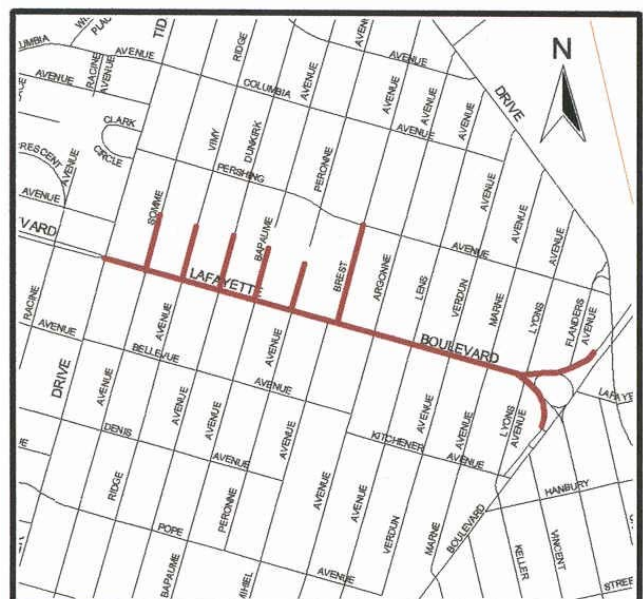
CIP Update

Lafayette Blvd. sewer replacement

The City of Norfolk is continuing to improve water and sanitary sewer services to its customers with the Lafayette Boulevard sanitary sewer replacement project, which is now 25% complete.

Currently the work is progressing along Lafayette Boulevard, between Vimy Ridge and Dunkirk Avenues, and in the area of Verdune and Marne Avenues.

In addition to sewer replacements, this project also will include water main replacements where necessary. The project will improve the sewer and water services to various residents and businesses along Lafayette Boulevard between Chesapeake Boulevard and Tidewater Drive. Completion is scheduled for July 2004. ♦



The Lafayette Boulevard sanitary sewer replacement project will also replace water mains where necessary in the area.